



# Call to Arms

Brunswick Civil War Round Table

## The President's Corner **by John Butler**



After the recent snow and cold weather, let's hope warmer weather is right around the corner.

If you are still suffering from cabin fever and want something to do, there are plenty of opportunities in the area.

If you are looking for an outside activity, visit [Moore's Creek](#). It's a Revolutionary Battlefield within an hour of Wilmington and the site of the first Patriot victory in the Revolution. There is a nice museum, and you can walk the whole

battlefield in less than an hour.

If you want to visit a truly unique site, visit [Boundless](#), a U.S. Colored Troops sculpture at the Cameron Museum. It's the only one of its kind in the nation. If you want something inside, visit Latimer House, Burgwin-Wright House or the Bellamy Mansion in downtown Wilmington. Page 14.

The BCWRT is extremely lucky to have the expertise of Chris Fonvielle, Jim McKee and Wade Sokolsky to lead tours of the local Civil War battlefields. You are going to get an opportunity to tour with each of these great historians in the next couple of months: an evening tour of Fort Fisher with Chris Fonvielle in March, two tours of Fort Caswell with Jim McKee in April, and a two-day seminar at Bentonville Battlefield with Wade Sokolosky in March and April including some of the new portions of the battlefield that have recently been opened. See pages 4 and 5 for details.

In May we will also be celebrating our 16th anniversary and will have music provided by the Coastal Harmonizers.

As a reminder, the March meeting is on Tuesday, March 17th at Hatch.

Remember if you cannot come to a meeting personally you can always watch it on live stream. See page 14 for the link and it is in our meeting announcements. If you miss a meeting, you can find it on our website by going to our YouTube tab two weeks after the presentation. We have all our presentations since COVID on our YouTube page.

Let us know if you've got a favorite neighboring Civil War site to add!

*John*

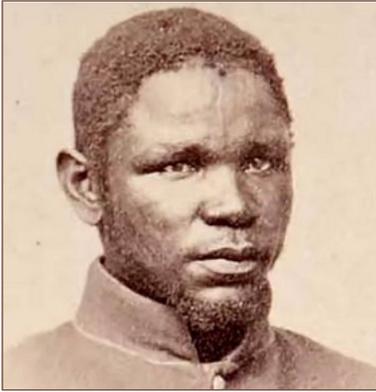
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Muster Notes

# BCWRT Upcoming Event

Tuesday, March 17, 2026 (Rescheduled from March 3)

## “The Sergeant: *The Incredible Life of Nicholas Said*”

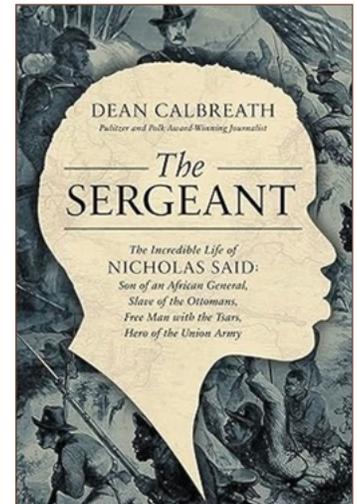


Simply stated, our topic for our March meeting will be presented by **Dean Calbreath**: The incredible story of Nicholas Said’s journey from his birth place in Central Africa, through Czarist Russia, to the frontlines of the Civil War.

So, who is Sergeant Nicholas Said? He was born as Mohammed Ali ben Said, the son of a cavalry general in the thousand-year-old kingdom of Borno in the center of Africa. After being captured by Tuareg raiders in his early teens, he was sold into slavery, and later purchased by the Russian ambassador to Istanbul.

Said journeyed through much of the Middle East and Europe, picked up at least nine languages, and crossed paths with kings, emperors, and tsars, before ending up in the United States on the eve of the Civil War.

After joining and serving his tour as a sergeant in the Union Army, he went on to become one of the nation’s first Black voting registrars, launched schools for newly freed slaves, and toured with his lecture series about the “possibilities that may be accomplished by the African.” This will certainly be another “must attend” meeting!



Dean Calbreath is a lifelong journalist, winner of dozens of awards, traveled through 42 countries and all 50 states, filed stories from five continents, and lived in Oregon, Maryland, Virginia, Texas, and the Czech Republic.

The work on his book, “*The Sergeant*”, represents over a decade’s worth of research, including travels to Detroit, Boston, Alabama, and Washington, D.C., as well as correspondence with archives in Russia, Latvia, The Netherlands, and England to retrieve documents on Nicholas

*Chuck Roedema*

**See page 14 for Pre-Registering for the Meeting and the link to watch on YouTube.**

# February Meeting Review

## Nothing Stops a Civil War Round Table Meeting

by **Chuck Roedema**

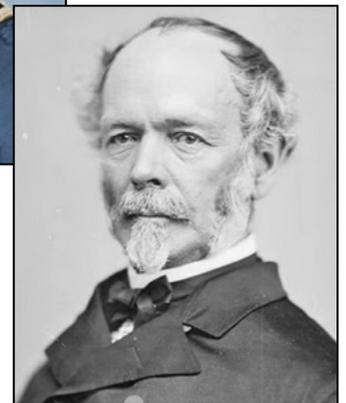
Despite less than ideal road conditions given the record snow and ice storm that blanketed the area recently, a huge number of area members and guests attended our February 3rd meeting.

Arriving from Chicago by car, guest speaker David Powell took center stage for a most interesting presentation entitled, *“The Atlanta Campaign: Missed Opportunities.”*



With his incredible knowledge of dates, events, and outcomes, accompanied by illustrative visuals, he took his audience through detailed military tactics surrounding Atlanta.

The focus was on Union Gen. Sherman and his desire to move aggressively against Confederate Gen. Joseph E. Johnston, not to capture Atlanta but to inflict maximum damage to the Confederate’s war effort.



Much of the presentation detailed mission failures or missed opportunities caused by miscommunications, misunderstandings, poor intelligence, and even uncertainty to advance armies despite direct orders.

The audience was captivated by the details and descriptions of what is considered one of the most important major encounters of the Civil War.

## Fort Fisher Tour

Saturday, March 14, 2026

3:00 pm

Cost: \$30 per person



The tour will be led by noted historian **Dr. Chris Fonvielle**, who will provide expert insight into the pivotal Civil War battle fought there on January 15, 1865.

To secure your spot: Contact **Jim Dunn** at [Jdunn44516@aol.com](mailto:Jdunn44516@aol.com) or 914-954-1931.

Space is limited, so early registration is encouraged.

## Fort Caswell Tour

Tuesday, April 7, 2026

We will have two tours led by Jim McKee before our meeting.

4:00 - 5:15 pm and 5:30 - 6:45 pm

Sign up at the March 17 meeting or  
Contact Jim Dunn

[jdunn44516@aol.com](mailto:jdunn44516@aol.com) or 914-954-1931



## Wilmington Historical Sites

*Wilmington is home to several historical homes and museums such as these three. Click on the names for links to their sites.*

### **Latimer House**

126 South Third St, Wilmington, NC  
Tuesday - Saturday, 10 am - 3 pm  
Call: (910) 762-0492

### **Burgwin-Wright House**

224 Market St, Wilmington, NC  
Monday – Saturday, 10 am – 4 pm

### **Bellamy Mansion**

503 Market St, Wilmington, NC  
Monday – Saturday, 10 am – 4 pm  
Call (910) 762-0570

# BGES Seminar

## Bentonville 2-Day Seminar

*“Have you been wanting to expand your knowledge of the Battle of Bentonville? Sign up and spend a few days in the woods with me at Bentonville as we further the study of the largest land battle fought in the Old North State during the Civil War. Don't miss your chance to explore new parts of the battlefield, formerly on private land. Maps and study material provided. You just need to wear some*

*comfortable walking shoes and bring your own lunch. Let's explore where the boys of 1865, both Blue & Gray, fought. Contact information on the picture below. Slots are limited, so register early. I hope to see you on the battlefield.”*

**Blue and Gray Education Society**

*Wade Sokolosky*

# The Battle of Bentonville Seminar in the Woods

## Blue & Gray Education Society

### 2-Day Seminar

March 12-13 or April 3-4, 2026

### Bentonville Battlefield State Historic Site

Cost: \$25 per day

Historian Wade Sokolosky

Every Battlefield has a Story to Tell

For more information, contact:

Wade Sokolosky

[BgesExDir@gmail.com](mailto:BgesExDir@gmail.com) / (434) 770-7325

All Proceeds Support Future Battlefield Interpretation

## *The Ladies' Forum*

October 19, 2026

*Save the date  
for an evening with  
Kate Stuart*



Kate Stuart was a formidable presence and civic leader in Southport during the Civil War and in the decades that followed. She was also the innkeeper of the most famous hostelry in Southport, the Stuart House.

**Sue Crippen**, an experienced performer, will portray Kate Stuart and give us an opportunity to hear about her life and events in Southport. Sue is a member of the Southport Historical Society as well as a member of their Living Voices group.



## FREE BOOK GIVEAWAY

We hope that everyone who has taken home their free books are enjoying them.

***We are continuing with our  
giveaway of free books in  
March.***

Come on up to the Sutler's Tables and choose whatever you like from all the books on display. Enjoy your read!

### **Our March 3 Meeting**

has been

**Rescheduled**

Due to lack of availability of Hatch Auditorium in the beginning of March, 2026, it was necessary to change the date from March 3 to **March 17, 2026.**

Our program will remain as originally planned, with a very interesting topic by **Dean Calbreath:**

*"The Sergeant: The Incredible Life of  
Nicholas Said: From Central Africa  
Through Czarist Russia  
to the Frontlines of the Civil War"*

## Civil War Art for Sale

Our framed print of General Sherman has sold, but we still have the **Mort Kunstler** work “**The Fairfax Raid**” available. This print depicts Mosby’s raid on Fairfax Court House and subsequent capture of BG Edwin Stoughton.



This matted print is dated and autographed by Kunstler. It is #0926 of 2,750 limited editions and comes with the Certificate of Authenticity.

Print size is 18" x 27 1/2" (overall size is 23" x 32 1/2").

This piece will be displayed and offered for sale at our March 17 meeting.

BCWRT's asking price for the Mort Kunstler print is \$125 (OBO). This is almost 25% less than the asking price on the Kunstler website, as well as others.

# Civil War Women and Recipes

## Amelia Bloomer (1818-1894)



As editor of *The Lily*, the first American woman's journal that was actually produced by a woman, Amelia Bloomer never intended to start a fashion revolution. As a Seneca Falls suffragist, her focus was on politics.

A cousin, Elizabeth Miller, came to town sporting Turkish trousers and a tunic of her own design. Amelia followed suit. This was at a time when most women carried about fifteen pounds of clothing on their bodies. Moralistic women quoted the Bible in denouncing the fashion. Elizabeth Cady Stanton's spouse expressed concern that women would show more leg. Curious men wanted to know if women's legs were plump or scrawny. Needless to say, the fashion never caught on but her career as a women's rights lecturer flourished.

From The *Civil War Ladies' Department* by Charen Bishop Fink. Shared by Robbin Smith

## Beef Steaks

*Traditionally these steaks would have been cooked over an open fire, and if you have the opportunity to cook steaks in this manner, don't miss it!*



- 2 Tbsp butter or oil
- 2 Beef steaks (best quality available)
- 3 onions
- Black pepper
- Mixed herbs
- Fresh horseradish

Beat the steaks with a mallet. Peel the onions and cut into thick circles. Heat the butter or oil in a large frying pan, when hot place the steaks in the center of the pan and surround with the onion slices with the pepper and herbs and fry quickly over a high heat to required doneness, turning halfway through. When the steaks are almost ready, sprinkle over some grated horseradish. Serve the steaks straight from the pan. Serves 2.

From *The Civil War Cookbook* by William C. Davis, shared by Robbin Smith

## Salisbury Steak's Origin

Disease killed more men during the American Civil War than combat, accounting for more than half the 600,000 fatalities during the conflict. Dysentery and its accompanying diarrhea alone were responsible for an estimated 100,000 deaths, reports HistoryNet.

Poor diet was one of the causes of this and Dr. Salisbury, a physician for the Union Army, believed he had a solution. His prescription was lean minced beef formed into patties, which he gave to soldiers to improve their nutrition and digestion.

<https://www.tastingtable.com/956624/salisbury-steaks-historic-connection-to-the-civil-war/>

## The Irish Saga Continues - by E. Gifford Stack



Some of you may remember the book review I wrote for the January 2024 issue of **Call to Arms**. Authored by Timothy Egan, *The Immortal Irishman: the Irish Revolutionary Who Became an American Hero* captured my attention immensely, partly for its vivid Civil War descriptions, but also for the dashing, daring nature of the hero - Thomas Francis Meagher. He was an Irishman who rebelled against his family's wealth and the hated British tyranny, who interestingly became a Civil War Union general, and eventually the acting governor of the Montana Territory.

He is honored with two statues - one in Waterford, Ireland, where Meagher was born, and another outside the Montana State capital in Helena. That, I thought after writing about the book, was that.



His life ended too early at the age of 43, most likely done in by the vigilantes he was attempting to put down.



But, like much of life, there was a surprise in store. This past August, my family took a cruise to...Ireland.



One of our stops: Waterford. Whose statue did we visit?: yep, Thomas Meagher's!

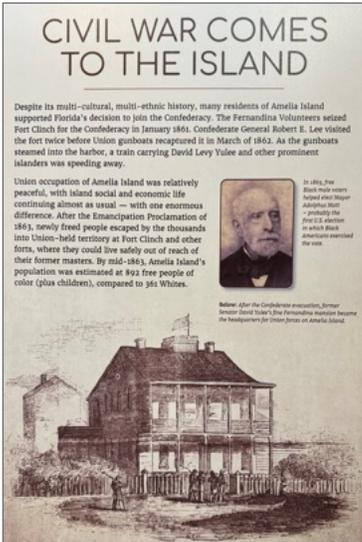
Thanks to my wife Sylvia, daughter Susan, and son-in-law John for recording the event. (You should definitely keep reading **Call to Arms** to see if I somehow make it to Helena!)

See Page 14 for a YouTube link to "The Irish Volunteer"



## Amelia Island

In October 2025 Naomi Macey, our Team Leader at the front end of our meetings, visited Amelia Island on the northern east coast of Florida. She was surprised to find so much Civil War history and shares her photos with Call to Arms.

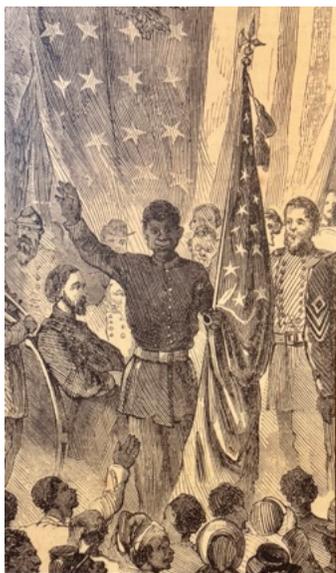
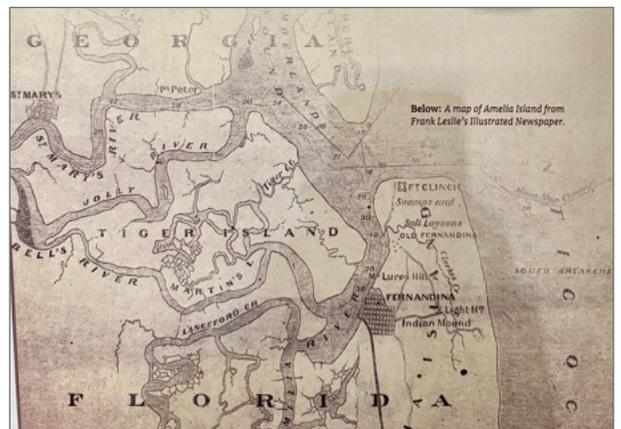


Fort Clinch, built to guard the entrance to the Cumberland Sound and the St. Marys River, was only about two-thirds complete - with no cannons yet installed - when the Confederate Florida Volunteers took control. By January 1862, more than 3,000 Confederate troops were on Amelia Island - but only 33 pieces of artillery. Knowing the fort could not withstand a Union attack, General Lee ordered Confederate withdrawal in the early winter of 1862.

Despite its multi-cultural, multi-ethnic history, many residents of Amelia Island supported Florida's decision to join the Confederacy. The Fernandina Volunteers seized Fort Clinch for the Confederacy in January 1961. General Robert E Lee visited the fort twice before Union gunboats recaptured it in March of 1862.

Union occupation was relatively peaceful, with island social and economic life continuing almost as usual - with one enormous difference. After the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863, newly freed people escaped by the thousands into Union-held territory at Fort Clinch and other forts, where they could live safely out of reach of their former masters.

By mid-1863, Amelia Island's population was estimated at 892 free people of color (plus children), compared to 361 Whites.



*Pictured at bottom left:* In 1865 free Black male voters helped elect Mayor Adolphus Mott - probably the first U.S. election in which Black Americans exercised the vote.

*Pictured at top left:* The mansion of former US Senator David Yule, which became the headquarters for Union forces after the evacuation of the Confederates.

# Civil War Views

## Amelia Island - The *Maple Leaf*

The text for the *Maple Leaf* and the torpedo is from the respective information boards and shared by Naomi Macey.

This paddlewheel steamer, the *Maple Leaf*, was built in Canada as a trade and passenger steamboat, then contracted by the U.S. Army in 1862. It was sunk by a Confederate torpedo, and now rests on the murky bottom of the St. Johns River near Jacksonville, Florida. It contains the largest assemblage of Civil War military and personal material in the nation.

Now a National Maritime Historic Landmark, the *Maple Leaf* is a virtual time capsule last touched over 130 years ago. Research on the recovered equipage and personal belongings yields a rich and fascinating tale of the ordinary combat soldier during one of the world's bloodiest wars.



## An Infernal Machine: 70 Pounds of Confederate Ingenuity



A new kind of weaponry, revolutionizing maritime war strategies was employed by the secret Confederate Torpedo Service under the command of General Pierre G. T. Beauregard. Their sole charge was to deploy mines in southern waterways and harbors. Called submarine torpedoes, the destructive mines were held in place by moorings just below the surface of the water making them virtually invisible. Submerged mines were introduced on the S. Johns River early in 1864.

The Torpedo Service was extremely successful. By war's end, forty-three Federal vessels, including four powerful monitors, were sunk or damaged by a variety of maritime mines. The most common Confederate mine and the one most likely to have sunk the *Maple Leaf* was the Rains keg torpedo.

# Meeting Photo Gallery

## Photos From the February 2026 Meeting



*“The Atlanta Campaign:  
Missed Opportunities”  
with David Powell*



*Another A-plus lecture!!! What a wonderful job conveying the personalities and the difficulties of this campaign. It is hard to imagine 85,000 troops and how you manage to feed them. Interesting that the trains played such a vital part -- that crops, etc. from the Atlanta area were sent to feed troops in VA. Thanks again for having this available on YouTube. Bravo!!! ~ Thanks,*

*Kendra Maxwell*



Pictures by Chuck Roedema

# Local Events

## Southport Historical Society Programs

Second Tuesday Talk

### Musette Steck

Tuesday, March 10, 2026

10:00 am

Margaret and James L. Harper, Jr. Library  
101 W. Moore Street, Southport.

Musette Steck, past president of the Southport Historical Society, will discuss the legacy of the Emanuel Nine, the nine members of Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, SC who were killed in a racially motivated shooting in 2015, and share her experience attending the memorial service commemorating their lives.

*Free. Reservations Required: 910-457-6237*

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### “Women Who Made Southport”

Thursday, March 26, 2026

6:30 pm

Southport Community Building  
223 E. Bay Street, Southport.

Learn more about the lives of the women featured in March's banner display along Howe St. and the Yacht Basin presented in conjunction with the City of Southport.

The meeting is free and open to everyone. Friends and family of the honored women will be special guests.

For reservations:  
[www.southporthistoricalsociety.org](http://www.southporthistoricalsociety.org).

## Cape Fear Civil War Round Table

### “The Recovery of the *USS Monitor*”

Presented by Don Kesling

Doug Kesling, a member of the team that raised the turret and other artifacts of the iconic *USS Monitor* from the waters off Cape Hatteras, the “Graveyard of the Atlantic,” will tell the story of this amazing and historically important achievement.

Kesling, from UNCW's Center for Marine Science (1990-2011) served as the mission coordinator and Diving Safety Officer for the self-contained, NOAA civilian diving team operation during a 12-year period.

On December 31, 1862, *the USS Monitor* was caught in a storm and sank 16 nautical miles off Cape Hatteras, North Carolina, in more than 230 feet of water. The *Monitor's* remains were discovered in 1973, confirmed in 1974, and in 1975 the wreck was placed under the jurisdiction of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) with the establishment of the Monitor National Marine Sanctuary.

Archaeological investigations and recovery of small objects began in the 1970s and into the early 1980s. In 1987, recognizing the artifacts needed a home, The Mariners' Museum and Park in Newport News, Virginia, was designated as the repository for their management and curation.

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Thursday, March 12, 7:00 pm

St John's Episcopal Church  
1219 Forest Hills Dr., Wilmington

## Notes from the February 13 Board of Directors Meeting

1. Our February meeting with David Powell had a good turnout -282 who braved the roads and parking, plus those who watched via YouTube - and was well received by the members.
2. The free book giveaway will continue at the March meeting. Many members have taken advantage of this program.
3. The Fort Fisher tour has been scheduled for March 13, 2026 with Chris Fonvielle. There will be two tours of Fort Caswell on April 7, weather permitting, otherwise on May 5.
4. Photos were done at the February meeting by a photographer for the quarterly South Brunswick Magazine which they will include in their next issue along with Chuck Roedema's write up about our 15th anniversary.
5. It was decided that \$1,000 would be donated to Alzheimer's in honor of Wally Rueckel.
6. Flowers will be purchased for Wally Rueckel's Celebration of Life, February 20, at the St. James Center.
7. It was also decided that \$250 would be donated to the Friends of Fort Fisher.

*Our next Board meeting is Tuesday, April 14, 2026. Meetings are held monthly. President John Butler leads the two-hour meeting that includes interested Advisors and members. The meetings are held at Trinity United Methodist Church in Southport one week following our gathering at Hatch and begin at 10:00 am. If you wish to attend or have suggestions for the Board, please contact John Butler at [jbutler2007@gmail.com](mailto:jbutler2007@gmail.com).*

## Pre-Register for the March Meeting

Starting Friday, March 3, and lasting until noon on Tuesday, March 17, current members may log into the system -<https://olr.bcwrnt-nc.org/> - to print a ticket (one each for yourself and your spouse) showing you've registered.

When you use the online system it will clearly show if you are current (dues paid)...and what to do if you are not up to date. It's that simple!



If you are unable to attend the meeting in person, you will be able to watch it via YouTube Live Streaming by using the following link:

<https://youtube.com/live/icJuHHfVUA?feature=share>

*To view at home on your TV: watch on YouTube TV if you have that, or you can "cast" or "mirror" from your phone to your TV. If you are unfamiliar with this, click [here](#) for a link to instructions..*

The **BCWRT YouTube Video Library** is where you will find all of the videos that have been created:

<https://www.youtube.com/@brunswickcivilwarroundtab14954/videos>



In tune with E.Gifford Stack's piece about the famous Irishman, Thomas Meagher, on page 9, listen and enjoy *The Irish Volunteer* on YouTube by clicking [here](#).





# Muster Notes and Notables

**The March BCWRT meeting is Tuesday, March 17, 2026.**

**Hatch Auditorium, NC Baptist Assembly, Fort Caswell, Oak Island, NC.**

**See page 15 for details to attend via YouTube.**

**Registration begins at 6:15 pm and the meeting starts promptly at 7:00 pm.**

**Mail Dues Checks to:** BCWRT, PO Box 10161, Southport, NC. 28461.  
(Please include your current phone number, street address, and email.)

## 2025-2026 Officers, Directors, and Advisors

John Butler: President & Director

Ann Birdsall: VP & Director

Jim Dunn: VP & Director

Jennifer Chapman: Secretary & Director

Tom Kehoe: Treasurer & Director

Bruce Jordan: Director

Chuck Roedema: Director

Gar Dowell: Advisor

Charen Fink: Advisor

Chris Fonvielle: Advisor

Jim McKee: Advisor

Chris Mackowski: Advisor

Skip Maxwell: Advisor

Roy Pender: Advisor

Wally Rueckel: Advisor

Wade Sokolosky: Advisor

Robbin Smith: Advisor

Len Trizinski: Advisor

John Wall: Advisor

Angela Zombek: Advisor

## Connect with us



We Welcome Your Suggestions for our Speakers, Website, Meeting Procedures, Membership Retention, etc.

The Brunswick Civil War Round Table does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, sexual orientation, creed, ancestry, disability or any other legally protected status in its educational programs, activities, or membership.

BCWRT is a 501 (c) (3) tax exempt organization,  
co-founded by Tom O'Donnell and Wally Rueckel and organized in May 2010.

**Call to Arms** Editor: Jennifer Chapman ([jennifer.chapman3@icloud.com](mailto:jennifer.chapman3@icloud.com))